WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A hand-held amusement device, comprising:

a spherical ball that defines a diameter;

a base having a length at least three times as great as the diameter, wherein the base is configured to be held in a person's hand, and the ball is rotatably mounted in the base in such a manner that a portion of the ball protrudes outward from the base, and the base provides first and second upwardly facing bearing surfaces on opposite sides of the ball, and each of the bearing surfaces extends parallel to the length for a distance at least as great as the diameter, whereby a person can place at least one finger on each of the bearing surfaces and roll the device across a support surface.

2. The amusement device of claim 1, wherein diametrically opposed portions of the ball protrude outward from opposite sides of the base.

3. The amusement device of claim 1, wherein an outside edge of the base is bounded by an arcuate surface that extends substantially the length of the base, whereby a person can place fingers on a side of the base opposite the arcuate surface and rock the device back and forth on the support surface.

4. The amusement device of claim 3, wherein the side is bounded by a flat surface that extends substantially the length of the base.

5. The amusement device of claim 1, further comprising a cylinder rotatably mounted on the base.

6. The amusement device of claim 5, wherein a portion of the cylinder protrudes outward from the base, whereby a person can roll the cylinder against the support surface.

7. The amusement device of claim 5, wherein a notch in the base exposes more than half of an outer cylindrical surface defined by the cylinder.

8. The amusement device of claim 1, further comprising a plunger movably mounted in telescoping fashion on the base.

9. The amusement device of claim 8, wherein the plunger is resiliently biased to protrude outward beyond a first end of the base.

10. The amusement device of claim 9, further comprising a clip slidably mounted on the first end of the base.

11. The amusement device of claim 10, wherein the clip is movable between an extended position covering a relatively larger portion of the plunger, and a retracted position covering a relatively smaller portion of the plunger.

12. The amusement device of claim 11, wherein the clip resiliently snaps into and out of each said position.

13. The amusement device of claim 1, further comprising a lever pivotally mounted on the base.

14. The amusement device of claim 13, wherein the lever is resiliently biased to remain in a retracted position with a perimeter defined by the base.

15. The amusement device of claim 14, wherein the lever is movable to an extended position protruding outward from the perimeter of the base.

16. The amusement device of claim 14, wherein a hole extends through an end of the base.

17. The amusement device of claim 16, wherein the lever is configured and arranged to align with the hole when in the retracted position.

18. The amusement device of claim 1, wherein a hole extends through an end of the base, whereby a person can insert a finger through the hole and spin the device about the finger.

19. The amusement device of claim 1, wherein the base is between three inches and six inches long, whereby a person can hold the ball between a thumb and an opposing finger and spin the device.

20. The amusement device of claim 1, wherein at least one word is embossed in braille on the base.

21. A hand-held amusement device, comprising:

a base; and

at least three amusing means on the base for amusing a person by providing manipulative exercises involving the person's hand, wherein the amusing means are selected from the group comprising:

(a) an outside edge of the base that is bounded by an arcuate surface and extends substantially the length of the base, whereby the person can place fingers on a side of the base opposite the arcuate surface and rock the device back and forth on a support surface;

(b) a cylinder rotatably mounted on the base, whereby the person can spin the cylinder;

(c) a plunger movably mounted in telescoping fashion on the base and resiliently biased to protrude outward beyond a first end of the base, whereby the person can push the plunger toward the base;

(d) a clip slidably mounted on the base and resiliently biased to remain in a latched position relative to the base, whereby the person can snap the clip into and out of the latched position;

(e) a lever pivotally mounted on the base and resiliently biased to remain in a latched position relative to the base, whereby the person can urge the lever away from the latched position;

(f) a hole extending through a second end of the base, whereby a person can insert a finger through the hole and spin the device about the finger; and

(g) at least one word embossed in braille on the base.

22. The amusement device of claim 21, wherein the group further comprises a spherical ball rotatably mounted in the base in such a manner that a portion of the ball protrudes outward from the base, and the base provides first and second upwardly facing bearing surfaces on opposite sides of the ball, whereby a person can place at least one finger on each of the bearing surfaces and roll the device across the support surface.

23. The amusement device of claim 21, wherein the base is configured for rotation about three orthogonal axes while supported in respective positions between a person's thumb and an opposing finger.

24. The amusement device of claim 21, wherein at least five of the amusing means are provided on the base.

25. The amusement device of claim 21, wherein the base is between three inches and six inches long, whereby a person can hold the device lengthwise between a thumb and an opposing finger and spin the device.

26. A hand-held amusement device, comprising:

a base sized and configured to be held between a person's thumb and opposing finger, and selectively rotated about an axis extending between the thumb and the opposing finger;

a plunger movably mounted in telescoping fashion on the base and resiliently biased to protrude outward beyond a first end of the base, whereby a person can push part of the plunger into the base; and

a hole extending through an opposite, second end of the base, whereby a person can insert a pencil through the hole and spin the device about the pencil.